

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 AF-10 AGRE-00 /117 W
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R 281701Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4001
INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 20603

USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SP, FR
SUBJECT: GISCARD'S VISIT TO SPAIN

1. SUMMART: PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING'S VISIT TO
SPAIN WILL CONSTITUTE AN IMPORTANT SYMBOLIC RECOGNITION
OF SPAIN'S NEWLY-EARNED PLACE IN DEMOCRATIC WESTERN
EUROPE. IT WILL ALSO UNDERLINE A COINCIDENCE OF
INTERESTS BETWEEN FRANCE AND SPAIN ON A WIDE RANGE OF
FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES, AND COULD SERVE TO ADVANCE
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SPANISH ENTRY INTO THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. THE FRENCH
ALSO HOPE TO GIVE IMPETUS TO BILATERAL COMMERCIAL
RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. SYMBOLISM: GISCARD'S JUNE 28-JULY 1 VISIT TO SPAIN
IS FIRST OF ALL A SYMBOLIC CONSECRATION OF FRENCH
ACCEPTANCE THAT POST-FRANCO SPAIN HAS A LEGITIMATE

PLACE IN DEMOCRATIC WESTERN EUROPE. IN REFERRING TO THIS ASPECT OF THE VISIT, ELYSEE SPOKESMAN PIERRE HUNT HAS CALLED THE TRIP "AN HISTORIC STEP" IN FRANCO-SPANISH RELATIONS, AND THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT IT REPRESENTS A DRAMATIC EVOLUTION FROM FRENCH HOSTILITY TOWARD SPAIN DURING THE FRANCO ERA. GISCARD IS TAKING WITH HIM AN UNUSUALLY LARGE AND HIGH-RANKING ENTOURAGE OF FIVE MINISTERS (FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENSE, AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRY AND CULTURE AND COMMUNICATIONS), SUGGESTING THAT THE FRENCH ANTICIPATE SERIOUS DISCUSSION OF A BROAD RANGE OF SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES. BUT THE ELYSEE HAS INDICATED THAT IT DOES NOT EXPECT MAJOR AGREEMENTS OR CONTRACTS TO BE SIGNED, AND THUS THE SYMBOLISM OF THE TRIP REMAINS ITS MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT. IN AN INTERVIEW ON THE EVE OF HIS TRIP GISCARD, WHO CHOOSES HIS WORDS CAREFULLY, HAS GIVEN FRANCE'S BLESSING TO SPAIN'S "EUROPEAN VOCATION," BY HIS STATEMENT THAT "THE CONTRIBUTION OF DEMOCRATIC SPAIN IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE PROGRESS OF EUROPE."

3. FOREIGN POLICY: THE VISIT ALSO SERVES TO UNDERLINE A NUMBER OF PARALLEL PERCEPTIONS OF FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES WHICH THE FRENCH ARE CURRENTLY INTERESTED IN STRESSING. THEY HAVE CALLED ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT FRANCE AND SPAIN ARE THE ONLY TWO EUROPEAN NATIONS WHICH ARE "BOTH ATLANTIC AND MEDITERRANEAN," AND THERE-
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FORE SHARE MANY OF THE SAME CONCERNS. THE FRENCH SEE SPAIN'S ORIENTATION TOWARD NORTH AFRICA AS SIMILAR TO THE STRESS THEY THEMSELVES HAVE PLACED ON EUROPEAN-AFRICAN TIES. THE FRENCH ROLE IN OPPOSING THE POLISARIO IN THE WESTERN SAHARA IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE COMMON PROBLEMS WHICH THE FRENCH BELIEVE THE TWO COUNTRIES FACE IN THE AREA. SIMILARLY, THE RECENT OAU CALL FOR INDEPENDENCE OF THE CANARY ISLANDS AND THE FRENCH OVERSEAS DEPARTMENT OF REUNION (WHICH PROVOKED WIDESPREAD INDIGNATION HERE) GIVES FRANCE AND SPAIN A DIFFICULT AND HIGHLY SENSITIVE NEW PROBLEM. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF OTHER FOREIGN POLICY AREAS WHERE THE TWO NATIONS HAVE SIMILAR INTERESTS: A BELIEF IN THE NEED FOR INCREASED TIES ACROSS THE MEDITERRANEAN, A MIDEAST POLICY AIMED AT ASSURING FRIENDSHIP WITH THE ARAB OIL PRODUCERS; A DESIRE TO BE FIRMLY WESTERN, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME BUILDING BETTER BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH INDIVIDUAL EASTERN EUROPEAN STATES; AND A VIEW THAT THE CSCE OFFERS A VALUABLE FRAMEWORK FOR IMPROVED EAST-WEST RELATIONS IN EUROPE. GISCARD HIMSELF, IN HIS JUNE 14 RESS CONFERENCE, UNDERLINED THE POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPING THIS CONVERGENCE OF VIEWS STILL FURTHER AND

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SEEING "HOW WE CAN STRENGTHEN OUR COOPERATION AND
ENVISAGE COMMON ACTIONS, FOR EXAMPLE TOWARD THE THIRD
WORLD OR LATIN AMERICA." (WE DOUBT THAT THE FRENCH
PLAN TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE SPANISH MEMBERSHIP IN NATO
DURING THE GISCARD VISIT, BUT EVEN WITHOUT SUCH DISCUS-
SION, OF COURSE, THE FRENCH PRECEDENT OF A FORM OF
PARTIAL MEMBERSHIP, DOES NOT SERVE OUR INTERESTS, AND
THERE ARE OTHER AREAS -- SUCH AS DISARMAMENT -- WHERE A
STRONGER FRENCH INFLUENCE ON SPANISH THINKING COULD BE
UNHELPPFUL.)

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4. EUROPEAN COMMUNITY: IN HIS JUNE 14 PRESS CONFERENCE GISCARD ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THE SPANISH CANDIDACY FOR MEMBERSHIP IN EC AS AN IMPORTANT SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION WITH SPAIN. THE MAJOR OBSTACLE TO SPANISH ENTRY IS POSED BY FRENCH AGRICULTURAL INTERESTS (THE MIDI), AND EARLY RESOLUTION OF THIS PROBLEM IS UNLIKELY. HOWEVER, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THERE MAY BE AN EFFORT MADE TO DEFINE BETTER EC MEMBERSHIP ISSUES DURING THE TRIP. THE PRESENCE OF MOST OF THE FRENCH MINISTERS CONCERNED WOULD SUGGEST THAT SUCH AN EFFORT MIGHT BE MADE, BUT GISCARD IS SURE TO MAINTAIN THAT THESE NEOTIATIONS WILL BE LONG AND DIFFICULT, SINCE THEY POSE "SERIOUS AND DELICATE" PROBLEMS. FROM THE FRENCH VIEWPOINT, THE QUESTION OF SPANISH ENTRY POSES THE DELIMMA OF POSSIBLE POLITICAL ADVANTAGES VERSUS PARTICULAR ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL DISADVANTAGES. THE DISADVANTAGE FOR THE FRENCH WOULD BE CHEAP COMPETITION FOR FRENCH PRODUCERS, PARTICULARLY IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR. THE POLITICAL ADVANTAGE WOULD BE A MORE PIVOTAL ROLE FOR FRANCE IN A COMMUNITY WITH A BETTER BALANCE BETWEEN NORTHERN EUROPEAN AND LATIN COUNTRIES. THE FRENCH BELIEVE THIS WOULD ENHANCE THEIR LEADERSHIP POSITION.

5. BILATERAL: FRENCH-SPANISH BILATERAL RELATIONS ARE GENERALLY GOOD. NEVERTHELESS, THERE ARE SOME TRADE PROBLEMS ABOUT WHICH THE FRENCH ARE CONCERNED. THE SPANISH DECISION, ANNOUNCED ON JUNE 23, TO BUY 48 MIRAGE F-1'S HAS UNDOUBTEDLY HELPED TO SWEETEN THE FRENCH ATTITUDE. BUT THE FRENCH ARE STILL DISTURBED BY A PERSISTENT BILATERAL TRADE DEFICIT, AND A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT SPECIFIC PROBLEMS (E.G. SPAIN HAS ADOPTED

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THE FRENCH SECAM COLOR TV SYSTEM IN PRINCIPLE, BUT HAS YET TO PUT IT INTO PRODUCTION.) WITH A BEVY OF CONCERNED MINISTERS PRESENT, THESE PROBLEMS ARE CERTAIN TO BE DISCUSSED IN DEPTH. THE FRENCH HOPE THE GOODWILL GENERATED BY THE SYMBOLISM OF THE VISIT, AND THE PROSPECT OF A MORE FAVORABLE FRENCH ATTITUDE TOWARD EC ENTRY, WILL HELP TO GIVE THEM A BETTER SHARE OF THE SPANISH MARKET.
HARTMAN

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